

On loan from the Tasmanian Museum.

JOHN WATT BEATTIE

John Watt Beattie (1859 - 1930) who was born in Edinburgh, arrived in Tasmania in 1878 and settled at first in New Norfolk. He was a notable photographer, both of views and portraits, and acted as photographer to the Tasmanian Government, and also took over Ansons' photographic studios (1892) in Hobart (the Beattie studios were sold shortly before his death). Many of Beattie's photographs of people and places were published in the Cyclopedia of Tasmania, (1st edn. 1900). He also prepared sets of lecture slides on the topography and history of Tasmania and gave many lectures himself. He was interested in the history and made an important collection of items relating to Port Arthur & convict days, which was sold to the Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston in 1927. Another collection was secured for the Tasmanian Museum Hobart after Beattie's death through William Walker, the City paying £250. Some of Beattie's lectures and photographic notes were placed with the Royal Society's manuscripts on loan by the Museum.

Some other papers of J.W.Beattie were bequeathed by him to the Royal Society for safe-keeping. These consist of copies of historical manuscripts and some original manuscripts, press cuttings and notes. See RS.30

PERSONAL PAPERS.

Letters from E.O.Cotton 1828, nd (2) and Bishop H.Montgomery 1905-9 (7), to J.W.Beattie. (10 letters) *from London*

RS.29/1

Notebook kept by J.W.Beattie when travelling from U.K. to Tasmania 1879 *and enclosing* copy of letter to his father about lack of potential for settlers in Tasmania and miscellaneous notes about Tasmania, *some loose sheets, notes, notes etc.*

*(my pocket memo book)*  
RS.29/2

(a) Journal of voyage to Western Pacific in Melanesian Mission Yacht "Southern Cross", (b) typed transcript (1980). (c) Diary relating to Norfolk Island (loose-pp 25 Aug. - 10 Nov. 1906) (d) Rough handwritten index to Pacific Journal

RS.29/3

Diary of a trip to the East Coast, including Maria Island and loose notes about a trip to North West and a few pages from old diary referring to Southport c 1895.

Also Southern Tasmanian Artillery instruction booklet. (1 pocket book)

RS.29/4

LECTURES

Lecture given to Royal Society on Mt Lyall District  
16 Nov. 1896

RS.29/5 (1)

- Lecture given to Royal Society about Port Davey  
25 May 1898 R.S.29/5(2)
- Lecture given to Royal Society: ~~Notes on the country~~ "From  
Kelly's Basin to Gormanston via the North Mt. Lyell  
Company's Railway route" (Ms. notes)  
10 Jul. 1829 R.S.29/5(3)
- Notes for lecture on the overland route to the West Coast  
via Emu Bay Railway  
27 Aug. 1901 R.S.29/5(4)
- Notes for lecture on West Coast and route back via Lake St.  
Clair  
nd R.S.29/5(5)
- Lecture notes for talk on West Coast  
nd R.S.29/5(6)
- West Coast Lantern Lecture notes  
nd R.S.29/5(7)
- Lecture on the East Coast to the Royal Society  
14 Sep. 1903 R.S.29/6(1)
- Lecture "Schouten Peninsula: its adaptabilities as a natural  
reserve for the protection of the native flora and fauna  
of Tasmania" given to Royal Society  
15 Aug. 1906 R.S.29/6(2)
- Lecture on Maria Island given to Tasmanian Field Naturalists  
Club  
14 May 1908 R.S.29/6(3)
- Notes for illustrated talk on East Coast  
nd R.S.29/6(4)
- Notes for lecture on the Schouten Peninsula  
nd R.S.29/6(5)
- Lecture notes for talk on Hartz Mt. area given to Royal Society  
16 May 1899 R.S.29/7(1)
- MS and Ts of talk on Hartz Mts. given in Launceston under auspices  
of Centenary Committee  
25 Oct. 1904 R.S.29/7(2)
- Lecture on Hartz Mts (given to Tourist Association?)  
nd R.S.29/7(3)
- "Some Notes on a recent trip to the Hartz Mts."  
nd R.S.29/7(4)
- List of slides used for Hartz Mts. Exhibition  
nd R.S.29/7(5)
- Ms Lecture on the Lake Country of Tasmania given to the Caledonian  
Society 39pp  
nd R.S.29/8(1)
- Ts lecture on the Lake Country given to the Tourist Association  
nd R.S.29/8(2)

- Notes to accompany slides of the Lake Country R.S.29/8(3)
- Paper "Notes on a trip to the Barn Bluff country" read to Royal Society  
9 Sep. 1901 R.S.29/9
- Notes to accompany lantern reading for the Agent-General (London)  
17 Oct 1902 R.S.29/10
- "Tasmania, the Playground of Australia" Talk given to  
Premiers of Australia at Town Hall, Hobart  
14 Feb 1905 R.S.29/11
- Talk to accompany slides on Northern Tasmania R.S.29/12
- Talk to accompany slides on Southern Tasmania R.S.29/13
- Lecture notes on the Solomon Islands.  
c.1907 R.S.29/14
- Two Ms lectures on photography  
1887 R.S.29/15
- Notebook giving details of photos taken in the Furneaux Group  
Jan 1911, and Huon area 1911, notes on R. Inches of Shipwrights  
Point and interview with Miss Blackwell (86) on 23 Mar 1911 R.S.29/16
- Notes on Macquarie Harbour R.S.29/17
- Alphabetically arranged notes of historical interest about people  
and places (A-T) including copy of Inches interview in R.S.29/16  
These notes have been annotated at a later date by an unknown  
writer R.S.29/18
- Miscellaneous notes, also annotated R.S.29/19
- Papers relating to Beattie's photographic record of celebrated  
politicians and all members of Parliament including letters  
about photos or portraits  
1894-5 R.S.29/20
- Port Arthur and Tasman Peninsula, illustrating the Convict Days of  
Tasmania J.W.Beattie Hobart, Mercury 14pp 1905. Annotated  
by J.W.Beattie (*printed booklet*) R.S.29/21
- Ms and printed copy of The Straits Islands of Tasmania J.W.Beattie  
Launceston, Examiner & Weekly Courier 12pp R.S.29/22
- Lantern slides, numbered "1-18" and stamped "Prepared by J.W.  
Beattie, Hobart".  
Include reproductions of early world maps, globes, pictures of  
sailing ships and navigation aids.  
Slides possibly used to illustrate a lecture on the history  
of the discovery of Australia. R.S.29/23

Royal Society of Tasmania Mss Colln. RS29/2

EXTRACT FROM POCKET NOTEBOOK OF J.W. BEATTIE

(A miniature pocket memo book used for miscellaneous notes, scripture study exercises, etc., written in light pencil)

LETTER

15/1/79

Volunteer Hotel  
Brisbane St.  
Launceston

Dear Father

I sailed from Melbourne in the Mangana on Friday the 10th inst. for Launceston. We sighted the shores, or rather the hills of Tasmania next morning at about 7 o'clock. We were soon near the mouth of the river Tamar on which Launceston is built. My impression on first seeing Tasmania from the mouth of the river was anything but good. It is terribly mountainous and rugged. We passed George Town which lies at the mouth of the Tamar. It is a wretched little place built entirely of wood. It is scarcely a town only a small village. The river is very long and winding and high mountains runs on both sides all the way up to Launceston and they have no very great appearance speaking from an agricultural point of view, being very bare looking and rocky. Houses are dotted about far apart from each other all the way up on either side but there is very little done in the way of "taking in" or clearing the land in fact it is hardly possible to do it being so very hilly and rocky. We arrived at Launceston at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and I cant say it is a very pretty place as regards the houses and harbour works. After a deal of backing and manueuvering [sic] we at last got alongside the wharf. It is no harbour at all being only a part of the river with a platform for the vessles [sic] to lie alongside of and when the tide is down the vessles lie in the mud. Most of the houses about this quarter are very mutch out of repair and all seem to be very quiet as very little business was done. If Launceston is the business place of the island goodness knows what Hobart Town will be like. Launceston is surrounded by high hills and you see higher ones towering above the rest to the west and norwest of the island. Mr Ayre the farmer I told you about in my last letter lives at a little place they call St. Leonards about 3 or 4 miles to the east of Launceston. I took a walk out to him on Monday and found he had gone to town but he was expected home soon so I waited him. Mrs Ayre is a very nice lady as is also Miss Ayre who seems to live with them. I got my dinner there and Mr Ayre made his appearance. I gave him my letter of introduction from Mr Sturrock and he was very well pleased to see me. He is a very nice agreeable man, and has several large places in NSW and Inland. He asked me your intentions when you come out here and on my telling him he said he would just give me his candid opinion. He said Tasmania is not the place to settle in with a view to better yourself. It would do very well with a man who had money and who was wanting to live quietly but to a person who had a little capital and who was wanting to increase it he strongly reccomended [sic] Adelaide or Queensland. He said all the good land of Tasmania was bought up, there was no doubt some good land in the bush but the cost of clearing it was very great in fact you can buy cleared land cheaper than you could the land under bush. And the price of manual labour was very high just now. A man gets some 40 to £50 per year and all found which he says eats up all the profits. He said it was all very well for the old colonists to thrive because they had the benefit of having convict labourers which only cost them £9 per year all found and they were splendid workers. But he said the best thing for you to do if you were bent on coming out to get a house in Melbourne (and you can live cheap there) where you could leave the family and take a run over to Tasmania and then you could judge for yourself whether you would settle in Tasmania or Australia. He said I should take a look through the island and he would give me letters to farmers who would give me as much information on the subject as could be got. Dear Father I must confess I was a little sorry to have all our fine dreams of settlement and the fine idea of the place we had, knocked to atoms but I have just told you exactly what I was told myself and what I had seen and thought because it wouldnt do for me to hide all these things from you and to bring you out here to be (God forbid) ruined. It would break my heart if you lost all through me. I have no doubt you will all be disappointed but I cant help it. There are great quantities of fruit grown in Tasmania but Mr Ayre says it dont pay as they are growing them cheaper in Australia than they can export them from

Tasmania. Tasmania is great in minerals but it needs such a lot of money to meddle with such things and money is thought little of in the colonies. For commerce this place is far back, it is just what a gentleman said who was travelling about "a regular dead and alive place". One time and at present there is a great cry about the mines but they will not last long and then Tasmania will fall asleep again for a another half century or so.

Dear Father I think my best plan is to go back to Melbourne again until I hear word from you whether you decide to come to Australia or stop at home. I will very likely get employment there in some shop. I liked the climate of Victoria well enough when I was there. It is hot no doubt, but the heat only lasts 1 or 2 months and then after that the weather is fine and agreeable. Mr Miller has very likely written you and he speaks very highly of Australia as all other experienced people do so it well may be just as well for us to settle there as it would be to settle in Tasmania. There is no chance of a job for me in Tasmania in the shop line but there are always openings in Melbourne. There were only three ships of any size lying at the wharf of Launceston in fact it wouldnt hold many more but there were 8 or 9 small smacks loading and unloading besides. The police force I am led to believe by a citizen amounts to the large number of 3 men and a seargent [*sic*]. The only defence against an enemy is some 40 or 50 raw volunteers and the four policemen which I have grave doubts about as to their fighting capabilities. In my next letter I will give you an account of the inland portion of the island although I am led to believe it is not much better than what I have seen. The climate I do not hesitate to say is good but Victoria is not far behind. The houses are all roofed with shingle that is thin pieces of wood about 4 x 8 and laid on the roof in the same way as slate, in fact you hardly know the difference between them. This mode of roofing is very dangerous because if any fire was getting in contact with it it would all go up in a blaze. It is not allowed in Melbourne at all for the above reason. Bullock teams are very common here, you see 6 or 8 bullocks attached to a cart loaded with logs of wood dragging it along slowly with the driver cracking his long whip about their ears. The railway travelling is very slow, 18 to 25 miles being the average rate the train runs at.

Dear Father I must say goodbye just now hoping to hear from you as soon as possible and to hear how I will act. Please address all my letters to Mr Miller. Give my best wishes to Grandma and Auntie and all the rest of them. I will write them all again next mail. I have sent some Tasmanian papers. I called at the immigration agent in Launceston to see and get as mutch information about as possible but I never found him, his office was always closed. I have no more at present but will write two or three times every mail.

Bequeathed to the Royal Society for safekeeping  
by J.W.Beattie through A.L.Butler.  
(R S.30/5 received from Miss J. Beattie, 1965)

### PRESS CUTTINGS

- 1 Book of press cuttings containing newspaper reports of lectures given by J.W.Beattie, tickets, invitations and pamphlets and cuttings which have been added after death of J.W.Beattie in June 1930 R.S.30/1
- 2 Book of press cuttings relating to Centenary Celebrations and lectures given by Beattie, with same invitations and letters 1904 R.S.30/2
- 3 Book of press cuttings of articles by J.E.Calder, annotated by Calder and an unidentified author R.S.30/3
- 4 Book of press cuttings of articles by David Burn "A Voyage to Van Dieman's Land in 1825" and "Overland Expedition to Macquarie Harbour by Sir John and Lady Franklin in 1842" (see also R.S.154) R.S.30/4

### ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

- 7 (1) Letter to William Keys from Arthur C. Harris from condemned cell, Hobart Gaol. (Harris hanged Jan. 1836 for murder of Capt. Gilson Brogg off New Zealand Coast 1835) R.S.30/7(1)
- 7 (2) Letter from Thomas Crisp to Joseph Hone about a Court incident 13 Sep., 1854 R.S.30/7(2)
- 7 (3) Licence to cut timber in Glamorgan 9 Dec. 1836 R.S.30/7(3)
- 7 (4) Blank baptismal form for entry 1830 R.S.30/7(4)
- 7 (5)
  - a) Three blank passes for ticket of leave holders to travel from one district to another R.S.30/7(5a)
  - b) Pass to travel to George Town issued to William Mitchell, ticket of leave holder, Launceston boat man, signed by William H.Breton, 1841 R.S.30/7(5b)
- 8 (1) Handbill "Tasmania expects every Man to do his Duty" Speech made by Thomas Macdowell at nomination of T.D.Chapman as anti-transportation candidate 1851 R.S.30/8(1)
- 8 (2) Prospectus Hobart Town and Sydney Steam Navigation Company Hobart 1854 (4pp.) R.S.30/8(2)
- 8 (3) Report 'To the Honourable the Members of the House of Assembly' Letter from 'a Colonist' Launceston 9 Nov. 1861 re Gregson & Balfe R.S.30/8(3)
- 8 (4) List of fares etc by twin ferry boat "Kangaroo" R.S.30/8(4)
- 8 (5) Hobart Town Gazette Extraordinary giving details of flags to be used on government vessels 9 Nov. 1875 R.S.30/8(5)

- 8 (6) Letterhead of the Australasian League R.S.30/8(6)
- 11 Correspondence from J. Boyd, Civil Commandant, Port Arthur, complaining of the action of Father Ryan, R.C. Chaplain in distributing copies of the Mercury to the invalid prisoners one copy of 5 Aug. 1850 which contained scurrilous article on the commandant R.S.30/11
- 12 Affidavit for marriage by Jean McLachlan of Tolosa, widow, before A. Simson, appointee of Moderator of Church of Scotland, to marry Charles Morrell, 13 Mar. 1845 R.S.30/12
- 13 Letter and memorandum from J. Boyd, Civil Commandant at Port Arthur and William Secombe about an enquiry into the conduct of the deputy superintendent, Mr. Brown [Thomas Brown] 1858, statements of prisoners R.S.30/13
- 14 Letter from Thomas Anstey, police magistrate at Oatlands to Frederic Roper Asst. Police Magistrate, Brighton, that he had summoned Farquar, familiar with George Aitchison's handwriting, to appear before Roper in the case of Ralph Todee, 24 Oct. 1832 R.S.30/14
- 15 Memo - P.G.Emmett, Muster Master, to A.P.M. Brighton 29 Jan. 1836 R.S.30/15
- 16 Application from Commandant at Norfolk Island, John Price, about building quarters for an over-seer, 1851, also notes of cases heard before John Price, 1838 (?page from register) R.S.30/16
- 17 Reward for the apprehension of a prisoner, Charles Flanders granted to Stephen Williams:- authority of Williams for John Butcher to receive the money, £1., 6 April 1850 (1 paper) R.S.30/17
- Writs of Ca.Sa. to sheriff to produce respondent to answer plea of debt:-
- 18 Henry Byron to answer Claude Wade Midwood, 1854
- 19 John Donnellan Balfe to answer Alfred Nicholas, 1855 R.S.30/18,19

#### COPIES OF DOCUMENTS

- 5 List of "duplicate despatches" 1825-1839, and copies of papers relating to the Irish exiles of 1848 in Beattie's possession 1899 (facsimile copies of colonial Government papers bought from J. Addison through A. Armstrong), 1848-1865; and list of Lt. Gov. Sorell's despatches 1818-1821 (1 vol.) R.S.30/5
- 9 (1) Ts copy of song written by C.J.Irvine for emigrants on board the 'Apolline' 3 Aug. 1842 R.S.30/9(1)
- 9 (2) Ts copy of article in The Hobart Town Britannia about shipwreck at Swansea 21 Nov. 1850 R.S.30/9(2)
- 9 (3) Ms copy of letter about "Orpheus" fund and memorial tablet 3 June 1864 R.S.30/9(3)
- 9 (4) Ts copy of letter from H.J.D'Emden to T.D.Chapman referring to Dr. W. Secombe c. 1855 R.S.30/9(4)
- 9 (5) Ts copy of statement of Alexander Laing, Sorell about Alexander

Redpath, his property, family and death  
18 Oct. 1867

R.S.30/9(5)

- 9 (6) Ts copy of petition from Invalids at Port Arthur for  
improved rations 27 Jan. 1873

R.S.30/9(6)

- 9 (7) Ts copy of application for leave of absence from Thomas  
Mason, P.M. Launceston 15 Jan. 1879

R.S.30/9(7)

BEATTIE'S HISTORICAL NOTES

- 6 Note by Beattie about sale by H.E.Smith of records from the  
Tasmanian Colonial Secretary's office - Col. Sorell's  
despatches and Collin's Garrison Orders (now in Mitchell  
Library) - typed note 26 Jul. 1902

R.S.30/6

- 10 (1 Ts copies of inscriptions on tombs at Anglican Church,  
i-ii) Kingston and Flinders Island, and at Spring Bay

R.S.30/10(1,  
i - ii)

- 10 (2) Ts list of persons executed in Tasmania, made by  
Marryat Hornsby from Sheriff's record 1825-1891

R.S.30/10(2)

- 10 (3) Ts statistical notes for Hobart 1804-21

R.S.30/10(3)

- 10 (4) Ts notes on aborigines to illustrate a photographic display  
(1p.)

R.S.30/10(4)

- 10 (5) Ms extract from Motley "Rise of the Dutch Republic" 1892 re  
Vronev Van Diemen

R.S.30/10(5)

- 10 (6) Ts extracts from London Life at the Police Courts concerning  
Aeneas Gifford & Sarah Ann Hunt 1842

R.S.30/10(6)